

S E C R E T

26 October 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Operations Officer, NPIC

SUBJECT : NPIC SAM Search of BLACK SHIELD Penetration Routes

1. Attached is a requirement for the Intelligence Division, OSA, to determine the lead time necessary for OXCART/BLACK SHIELD penetration routes in Communist China. This arrangement will be similar to that presently used by the IDEALIST Division. As you can see by the attached, there is a problem in the amount of lead time which we can provide you for the route search. After noting the attachment, would you please advise me, by cable, of your comments concerning the proposals. It is my understanding that NPIC can perform a thorough route search of any given area if given sufficient time. In this case it is estimated that the average length of the track over denied territory may be in the vicinity of 2500 NM, and the width of the search to be extended to 50 NM. I would guess that X number of hours would normally be required to search a route of this length and width and anything short of this number would leave something to be desired. If, as the operators contend, they can allow, even under the alternate proposal, a maximum of 21 hours for a SAM search, I would assume that the thoroughness of the search then becomes directly proportional to the reduced time allotted. In other words, if less than X number of hours is given NPIC to search a route, then the operators must expect a lessening of confidence factor in the SAM search report and not be surprised that some time or another a SAM Site might be detected, not previously discovered by NPIC. The chances of this happening would, of course, increase as the actual time needed for a thorough search by NPIC is reduced by the operator.

2. Request your comment on the 21 hour figure given in the attachment and state to what degree, in your opinion, you think NPIC could perform a thorough SAM search of an average route 2500 miles long, 50 NM wide. Request your response, if possible, prior to COB 29 October, as noted in attachment.


C/ID/OSA

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